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**NOTE:** DO NOT print this form. Printing will disable the electronic signature features. This form will not be accepted if it is printed and scanned.

# Special Assistant GS-0301-11

# **Introduction**

The position is located in the Immediate Office of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA), Office of Public Engagement and Environmental Education (OPEEE). The Special Assistant provides administrative support and advice to the Associate Administrator (AA) for Public Engagement and Environmental Education and other senior officials on a wide variety of topics and issues.

The proposed incumbent of the position, requested for Schedule C, exception will not be able to adequately perform their duties without being privy to the political, personal, and management philosophies of the Associate Administrator. A confidential relationship of a Schedule C nature is imperative since the incumbent will speak for the Associate Administrator and, as such, will be expected to reflect their supervisor's philosophies in conversations with leading figures of the government, business and other groups. The incumbent will also be obliged to present the views of the Associate Administrator in correspondence and other communications with Agency managers and program officials.

# **Major Duties and Responsibilities**

- 1. Plans, organizes, and carries out program assignments to maintain, improve or create systems and programs directly related to the activities and events associated with the Office of Public Engagement and Environmental Education. Develops and applies analytical approaches, methodologies, concepts and techniques to plan and carry out studies/projects to assist the AA and OPEEE in program planning, measurement, or progress evaluation. Provides insight and advice based on proven techniques and procedures. Provides alternatives to conventional problems identified. Identifies and researches the pros and cons of alternative solutions. Uses judgment and discretion in determining intent, and in interpreting and revising existing policy and regulatory guidance. Plans, evaluates, coordinates, and integrates activities with other applicable staff elements and functions.
- 2. Drafts and compiles weekly and other recurring reports. Gathers and evaluates programmatic data to develop recurring or special reports, prepares executive briefings and similar materials for use by management in carrying out and reporting on program accomplishments. Collects, evaluates, and develops executive summaries, metric data, and annual report data for assigned areas. Prepares presentations and briefings on studies/analyses/evaluation results, in support of the overall program requirements, as assigned. Prepares, presents, and defends data developed for this purpose.
- 3. Applies practical knowledge and skills to identify new methods, approaches, or procedures to eliminate and avoid all negative concerns, issues, and/or perspectives regarding the operations of staff throughout the Office. Works closely with senior staff members to ensure changes and set timeframes are feasible, effective, and timely.

- 4. Manages the schedule of the AA and has responsibility for providing advice and oversight in the area of scheduling and logistical support for conferences and meetings involving the AA. Maintains calendar of appointments and conferences and keeps informed of the AA's schedule of activities and commitments to remind them in advance of commitments made. Coordinates and schedules travel for the AA. Organizes briefing materials for the AA's meetings, events, and travel.
- 5. Monitors telephone calls, attends meetings, or is briefed on meetings immediately after they take place in order to keep abreast of what commitments were made and what developments occurred in matters of concern to the AA. On own initiative or as directed by the AA, as necessary, informs staff and office heads of developments in such conversations and meetings and arranges with them for the implementation of commitments made by the AA.
- 6. Keeps abreast and serves as a source of information for the AA.
- 7. Provides timely input and suggestions when administrative management guidelines and procedures are being developed to ensure smooth and uninterrupted operations for handling highly sensitive and/or urgent tasks, especially those of a political nature. Takes initiative to keep current with all changes to governing regulations, laws, directives, circulars, policies, and procedures that impact, or could impact, assigned areas. Maintains an understanding of ongoing efforts and changes of mission within the organization and other related activities.
- 8. Formats and edits memos, letters, etc. for the AA and OPEEE senior management and assists with their transmission and recording for retention.
- 9. Performs other related duties as assigned.

# **Factor Level Descriptions**

## **Factor 1 - Knowledge Required by the Position**

**Level 1-7 (1250 points)** 

Extensive knowledge and understanding of administrative principles, practices, methods and techniques, and skill in integrating management services and program support with the general management of an organization to support OPEEE and the AA.

Knowledge and skill in applying analytical and evaluative methods and techniques to a wide variety of issues sufficient to plan, organize, and carry-out program assignments to maintain, improve or create systems and programs directly related to the activities and events associated with the office.

Keeps informed of the philosophies, convictions and special interests of the AA. Keeps abreast of the major programs and policies of the Agency that are legislative in nature and are of interest and concern to various stakeholders.

Ability to develop procedures for the conduct of administrative support functions for management as well as resolution of the difficult every-day problems encountered in the organization serviced.

Knowledge of and skill in identifying new methods, approaches, or procedures to

eliminate and avoid concerns, issues, and/or perspectives regarding the operations of staff throughout the office.

Knowledge of pertinent laws, regulations, policies and precedents which affect administrative operations of the office.

Interpersonal skill in presenting recommendations and negotiating solutions.

#### **Factor 2 - Supervisory Controls**

**Level 2-4 (450 points)** 

The supervisor sets the overall objectives for the work. The supervisor and employee develop mutually acceptable work plans which typically include identification of the work to be done, the scope of the work, and deadlines for its completion. Within established work assignments, the employee is responsible for planning and organizing work, estimating costs, coordinating with staff and line management personnel, and conducting all phases of the work. The employee informs the supervisor of potentially controversial findings, issues, or problems with widespread impact. Completed assignments, projects, reports, or recommendations are reviewed by the supervisor for compatibility with organizational goals, guidelines, and effectiveness in achieving intended objectives.

#### Factor 3 - Guidelines

**Level 3-3 (275 points)** 

Guidelines consist of standard reference material and manuals covering the application of analytical methods and techniques and the subjects involved. Analytical methods are not always directly applicable to specific work assignments; however, precedent studies of similar subjects are available for reference. At this level, work assignments are covered by a wide variety of administrative regulations and procedural guidelines. The employee must use judgment in researching regulations, and in determining the relationship between guidelines and organizational efficiency, program effectiveness, or employee productivity.

## **Factor 4 - Complexity**

**Level 4-4 (225 points)** 

Plans and implements administrative programs for an organization. Develops detailed plans, goals, and objectives for the long-range implementation and administration of the program. The work involves gathering information, identifying and analyzing issues, and developing recommendations to resolve substantive problems effecting program support for the office. Requires the application of qualitative and quantitative analytical techniques that frequently require modification to fit a wider range of variables. Refines existing work methods and techniques for application to the analysis of specific issues and resolution of administrative problems.

#### Factor 5 - Scope and Effect

**Level 5-3 (150 points)** 

The incumbent plans and carries out projects to improve the efficiency and productivity of the organization and employees in administrative support activities. At this level, the employee identifies, analyzes, and makes recommendations to resolve conventional problems and situations in workflow, work distribution, appraisal, organizational structure, and administration. Employees may be assigned portions of broader studies of largely administrative organizations or participate in the evaluation of program effectiveness at the operating level. Completed reports and recommendations influence decisions by managers concerning the internal administrative operations of the organizations and activities studied. Applies accepted principles, methods, and guidelines to the clerical aspects of program implementation at the operating level.

# **Factor 6/7 - Personal Contacts/Purpose of Contacts**

Level 3c (180 points)

Personal contacts include employees, supervisors, and managers of the same agency, but outside of the immediate office; contacts may also include representatives from Congress, the White House, the Office of Management and Budget, and other Federal agencies, State, local and Tribal governments, and members of the public and business leaders in a moderately unstructured setting.

The purpose of contacts is to influence managers or other officials to accept and implement findings and recommendations on administrative operations. May encounter resistance due to such issues as organizational conflict, competing objectives, or resource problems.

# **Factor 8 - Physical Demands**

Level 8-1 (5 points)

The work is primarily sedentary, although some slight physical effort may be required.

#### **Factor 9 - Work Environment**

Level 9-1 (5 points)

The work is typically performed in an adequately lighted and climate-controlled office. May require occasional travel.

**Total Points: 2540** 

**GS-11 Grade Range: 2355-2750**